



CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES

NEWS FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

January 12, 2016

Contact: Lauren Hersh, DWR Public Affairs
(916) 653-2639 Lauren.Hersh@water.ca.gov

Mark Nordberg, DWR Senior Engineering Geologist
(916) 651-9673 Mark.Nordberg@water.ca.gov

New Laws Bring Changes to Sustainable Groundwater Management Act; DWR Continues Outreach

SACRAMENTO –New amendments to the landmark [Sustainable Groundwater Management Act](#) (SGMA) modify and clarify some of the rules that local agencies will need to address when forming a groundwater sustainability agency (GSA). The SGMA amendments also change the Department of Water Resources' (DWR) role in reviewing, posting, and tracking GSA formation notices. DWR is continuing its [technical](#), [financial](#) and [facilitation](#) assistance to local agencies as they adapt to the changes. What's new:

- **COMPLETENESS REVIEW:** Prior to Senate Bill (SB) 13, DWR was responsible for posting GSA formation notices, as they were submitted, within 15 days. DWR is now required to only post "complete" notices. DWR will conduct a completeness review for each notification received after January 1, 2016, and also will be reviewing existing notifications before posting on its updated [GSA Formation Table](#) and [GSA Interactive Map](#). Additional information related to GSAs, what constitutes a completeness review, and GSA Frequently Asked Questions are available on DWR's GSA website at <http://water.ca.gov/groundwater/sgm/gsa.cfm>.
- **OVERLAPPING GSAS:** SB 13 addresses overlapping GSA areas in Water Code §10723.8(c) Now, if two or more local agencies form (or have formed) GSAs in the same portion of a basin within a 90-day period, which result in overlapping service areas in all or a portion of the basin, then none of the GSA formations will move forward until the overlap is resolved.
- **SERVICE AREA BOUNDARIES:** SB 13 added Water Code §10723.8(d), which addresses a local agency's decision to become a GSA in part of a basin that exceeds its service area boundaries. A local agency could make a decision to manage groundwater outside of its service area, but that agency would not be the exclusive GSA for any portion of the basin beyond the boundaries of its service area.

DWR has revised its [GSA Formation Guidelines](#) for local agencies to use after they have decided to become or form a GSA. The guidelines outline the information that must be submitted by a local agency in accordance with the Water Code.

DWR will regularly update its [GSA Formation Table](#) to reflect the status of local agencies that have formed GSAs. A GSA will be identified by DWR as an exclusive GSA for the area described in its notice if no conflicting GSA was formed within 90 days. No other GSA formation notice will be posted for that area of the basin unless the exclusive GSA withdraws its notice. If two or more local agencies file GSA formation notices for all or part of the same area of a basin (within the 90-day period), the GSA status will state "Overlap." The GSA Formation Table will reflect the active 90-day period for a GSA.

GSAs must be formed for all high- and medium-priority groundwater basins by June 30, 2017 or risk basin probationary status and intervention by the State Water Resources Control Board. For more information on the California's Groundwater Programs please visit: <http://www.water.ca.gov/groundwater/index.cfm>

Every Californian should take steps to conserve water. Find out how at www.SaveOurWater.com.
